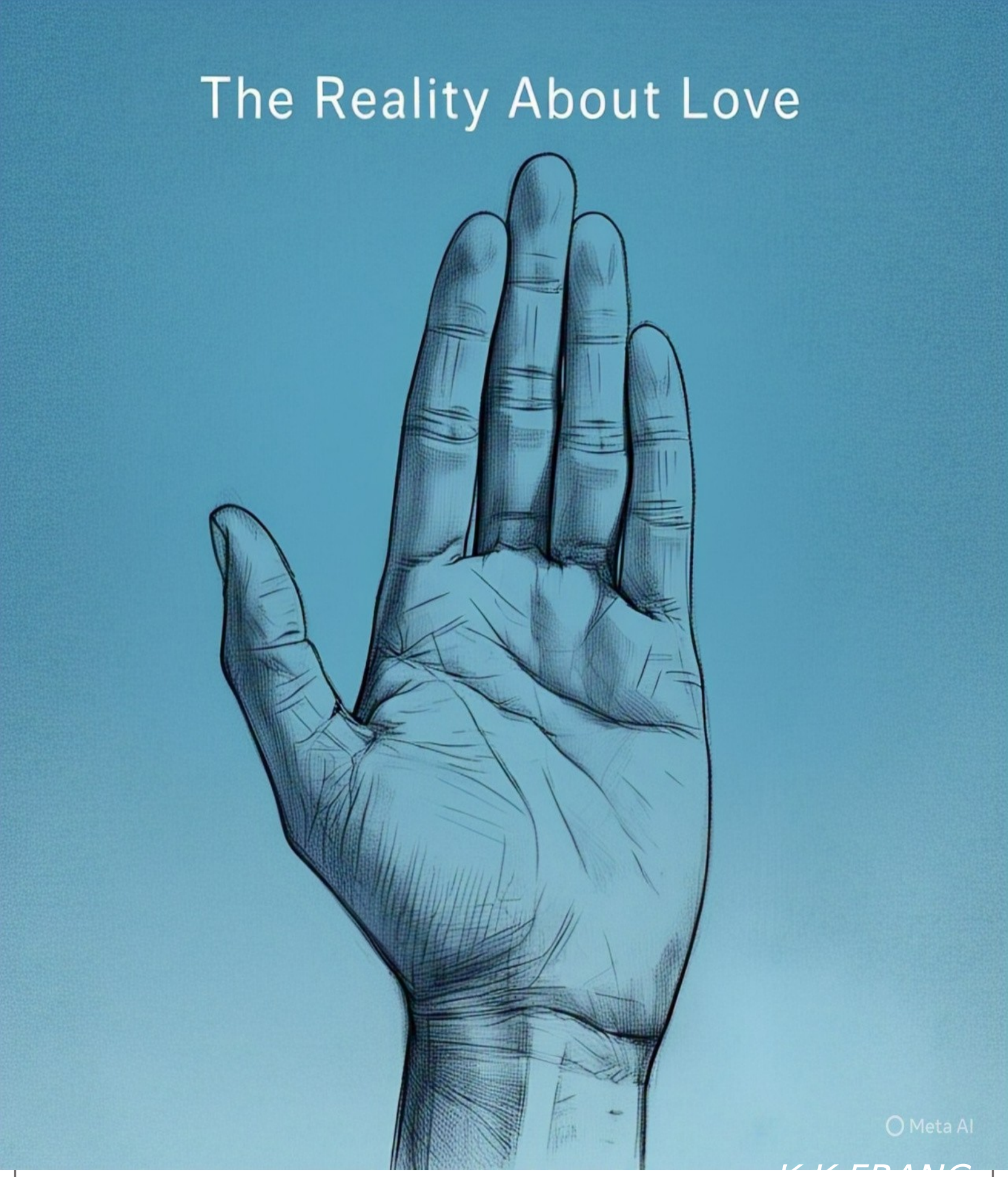
The Reality About Love



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Introduction.

Perhaps you're now wondering, "Who exactly is Kayemba Kizito Francis?" I grew up in Uganda, in Kampala city, specifically in the Labaga division. Our household consisted of five to seven family members. Among them were my two brothers, my uncle, my cousin, and my aunt, along with my mother. Our father would visit occasionally, as he lived in another district, Masaka, where he had his first wife before our mother, who was his second. In our early years with my brothers, things seemed peaceful, though we saw our father infrequently. However, we could feel his love whenever he was home; those moments were heartwarming and brought us joy. Since our father was a farmer and businessman in Masaka, he would bring us high-quality matooke in large quantities. If not, we would go to the market with him when he returned, buy some meat, and he would leave us with pocket money as a way of saying goodbye – that was our favorite part!

My brothers and I all attended boarding school during our primary years. When my older brothers finished primary school, they moved on to secondary school, and I joined them later as the youngest. Since the secondary school was near our home, we would commute daily.

I started secondary school late because I was waiting for a bursary from another school, which was delayed. Consequently, I had to enroll in the school where my brothers were already studying, making me a term behind. Catching up with the other students was challenging because I had missed the first term, and senior one class was not easy for me.

Finally, my bursary arrived after I finished senior one, and I transferred to the school funded by a German foundation. I began to perform well, as I was supposed to from the beginning of senior three onward, and my academic performance never declined. After secondary school, I joined an Agricultural College where I pursued a course called Animal Husbandry, as I had a passion for animals. During my college application process, my mother worried about my job prospects in this field because she didn't know anyone with a farm. The scenario went something like this: "How will you get a job in this field when I don't know anyone who owns a farm? And even those who do often have their own children study this and can treat their animals themselves." I replied, "I'm not studying this course to look for a job; I'm studying it because I'm going to create my own farm." Then she said, "But you have to first work and earn some money that you will use to make more money." That left me silent, but I thought to myself that I would do other things until I could establish my farm. Now, consider this: did I get a job after college? No. I'm doing other things to earn money to start my own farm.

Perhaps you're wondering where my father was during all of this. Actually, my father stopped coming home after recovering from an illness that had afflicted him when we were in secondary school. During that time, he used to be home every day. His recovery from that strange ailment, which was unusual to me and others since no one knew its name and our elders attributed it to demonic influence, led to misunderstandings between my parents, and my father never returned home. It was the worst period in my life because my father left at a time when I needed him most.

You might also ask how I came up with the idea of writing this book about the reality of love. As the saying goes, "You can't know the real taste of something until you taste it." I have experienced different kinds of love and have approached various people to gather diverse opinions, which have led me to create this masterpiece. Enjoy it as you read through.

Please note that the information shared is not the definitive reality of love but represents some of the realities of different categories of love.

Context

1. Self-love: The foundational love, the acceptance and care we hold for ourselves.

2. Love before marriage: The budding romance, the courtship, the exploration of connection and commitment.

3. Love in marriage: The deep bond, the partnership, the navigating of life's journey together.

4. Parental love: The unconditional and nurturing affection a parent holds for their child.

5. Relatives' love: The familial ties, the bonds of blood and shared history.

6. Spiritual love: The connection to something greater than oneself, whether it's a deity, nature, or a universal force.

7. Community love: The sense of belonging and care for the people within one's larger social circle.

1. Self-Love

"Love manifests in various forms. However, a fundamental question arises: do we cultivate self-love before extending or accepting affection from others? How deeply do we truly cherish ourselves? Research into self-love indicates a significant influence from our upbringing. Individuals who experienced harsh treatment in their youth may develop self-hatred and a lack of confidence when facing new challenges. Conversely, those raised in nurturing environments often possess self-assurance rooted in feeling loved.

You understand the concept of self-regard, yet there are individuals consumed by self-obsession, whom we label narcissists. These individuals exhibit an extreme degree of self-love, bordering on egoism and excessive pride. Their inflated sense of self can lead them to harm others, neglecting the needs and feelings of those around them. Often driven by a fear of vulnerability, they may disregard the impact of their actions on others. Many such individuals tend to be introverted, perhaps because they seek little external validation for their self-worth. They often keep their thoughts private, which can result in irritability and limited close relationships. Their words are typically direct and unambiguous.

If you find yourself in close proximity to such individuals, be cautious about prioritizing your own self-love, as those who become close may inadvertently end up serving their ego and pride. Narcissists can manipulate those who care for them by leveraging their own ego and pride (Fanx Katz)."

2. Love before marriage

The essence of love, though a singular concept, manifests in diverse ways, shaped by temporal shifts, financial realities, maturity, lived experiences, individual personalities, and gender dynamics.

Love preceding marriage possesses a distinct character, initially imbued with a delightful sweetness, igniting fervent emotions and arousing desire. This form of love matures through stages over time. In its nascent phase, it burns intensely, fueled by promises and eager commitment, though often intertwined with mutual attraction.

Within this pre-marital love, assurances frequently dominate, sometimes accompanied by frequent sexual intimacy – a recurring theme. This period can be marked by the overlooking of potential issues and the making of promises that may prove unattainable. Even everyday gestures, like dates that stretch financial limits or expenditures aimed at pleasing one partner, become part of this early romantic narrative.

This trajectory of love may culminate in marriage, contingent on various factors. Throughout this pre-marital phase, individuals either achieve genuine understanding or fall into misinterpretations, often because this type of love can involve a degree of deception employed to persuade the other.

Interestingly, untruths and promises can, in fact, contribute to a sense of well-being in pre-marital love, offering comfort and reassurance. Paradoxically, the very lies within this dynamic can provide a temporary harmony, sustaining the relationship through potentially challenging times. However, like a concealed corpse, these lies eventually risk exposure, and their revelation can either shatter the relationship or leave it intact, depending on one's skill in deception.

Love founded on truth fosters lasting peace and flourishes over time, whereas love constructed on falsehoods resembles a desert flower requiring constant sustenance; neglect leads to its inevitable decline.

The dynamic of this form of love can be summarized as follows: an initial act of love, a striving to be loved in return, an effort to maintain that love once reciprocated, and a tacit expectation of potential untruths if the expression of love is not entirely genuine.

3. Love in marriage

Love in marriage is a topic that evokes diverse perspectives. Some believe that with familiarity, the initial spark inevitably fades. They contend that the daily realities of marriage—problem-solving, shared responsibilities, and the routine of life—often overshadow intimacy. The demands of raising children, unexpected illnesses, conflicting thoughts, and unfulfilled sexual desires can take center stage. Communication may falter, leading to frequent arguments and mutual regrets about one's partner. In this view, the diminishing of love over time seems almost inevitable.

However, others experience a different trajectory. They find that love deepens through shared experiences and mutual growth, evolving into a strong and unbreakable bond. This perspective highlights the capacity for understanding that develops when couples navigate challenges and disagreements with patience and respect.

The foundation of enduring love in marriage often rests on four pillars: mutual love, understanding, provision, and respect. Both partners bear the responsibility of upholding these pillars. When love begins to wane, it may be a sign that previously ignored red flags from the pre-marriage phase are now surfacing.

It's impossible to discuss marital love without addressing the significant impact of infidelity. Cheating can shatter the bond between partners, devastating their feelings and often leading to the dissolution of the relationship. The silent tension of nights spent back-to-back, filled with unspoken words, worries, and doubts, is a stark reminder of the fragility of this connection.

For some, love in marriage mirrors a divine love, characterized by creation (of family), provision, unwavering affection, and forgiveness. When a spiritual foundation is prioritized, disagreements can transform into constructive discussions, and conflicts can lead to reconciliation.

Think of love in marriage as a seed. Nurtured with care and attention, it blossoms and bears fruit. Neglected, it withers and fails to reach its full potential. This kind of love differs significantly from pre-marital love. If the initial affection is not nurtured with thoughtful words and actions, the outcome can be devastating, leaving lasting heartache.

Ultimately, love in marriage can indeed come to an end for many. This conclusion is often marked by pervasive anger, disappointment, and blame. The ensuing

conflict can deeply wound children, leaving them with indelible memories of a fractured family. Personal experience teaches that such heartbreak can feel like a deeply rooted seed, causing slow and persistent pain until one learns to live with its presence.

4. Parent love

Whether you are a parent or not, the concept of parental love is profound. For parents, witnessing their child's smile and health brings a uniquely radiant joy.

Parents express their love in diverse ways. While some, particularly in Western cultures, readily offer hugs, kisses, and material provisions, others, often in African and European cultures, might emphasize discipline, responsibility through chores, and a more directive approach they believe is right, sometimes without fully considering the child's perspective.

Regardless of the method, parental love typically involves providing for, educating, motivating, and mentoring children. When these needs are met, children often find success more readily.

The influence of both parents shapes a child's development in distinct and significant ways. Let's consider different categories of parental love:

1. Both Parents' Love: This can be considered a comprehensive form of love, offering a child varied aspects of nurturing. In a two-parent household, mothers often guide children in understanding the emotional landscape, while fathers might instill respect for structure and authority. For instance, a father might instruct the mother that children shouldn't be in their rooms during supper preparation. The mother then conveys this to the children as "Your dad said..." This teaches children to respect established rules, a principle that applies in various real-world settings. Ideally, the father provides guidance, and the mother enforces it with care. Children raised in this environment often develop resilience and become well-rounded individuals. Those who experienced this were indeed fortunate. However, those raised by single parents or other loving figures were equally blessed by the care they received. As Heraclitus said, "Character is destiny." Children raised by both parents tend to be more sociable, empathetic listeners who are comfortable expressing their feelings and less afraid of judgment. They often possess a positive and open demeanor, making connections easily due to their relative lack of social insecurities.

2. Single Parent Love: This category includes children raised by single mothers or single fathers. Generally, these children may exhibit different behavioral patterns as they mature. Children raised solely by mothers, like those raised solely by fathers, undoubtedly face unique challenges, yet they can still achieve success. In this setting, children may develop certain insecurities during their upbringing.

Consider women raised by single mothers. Often, they are raised to be independent and not to rely on men. While this might be perceived as instilled negativity towards men due to past experiences, it's often intended as empowering advice. Some of these women strive to build strong relationships to avoid repeating their mothers' experiences, while others, having witnessed their mothers' self-reliance, may be less concerned about relationship endings, adopting the mindset, "If my mother raised me alone, I can do the same." It's important to note that children raised by both parents don't automatically have successful relationships. Research from Dr. Franchins (2002-2012) suggests that a higher percentage of adults raised by single parents (80%) report being in healthy relationships compared to those raised by both parents (30%). This might be because those raised by both parents may take healthy relationships for granted and be less equipped to handle difficulties, while those raised by single parents often work harder to provide a stable family life for their own children, having experienced the absence of a parent. Furthermore, women raised by single mothers may have been taught that "men are all the same," potentially leading to unhealthy relationships, although some learn and navigate towards healthier partnerships through life experiences.

Men raised by single mothers often display gentleness, respect for women, and appreciation for their efforts, likely due to their mothers' experiences. They tend to be more emotionally attuned and less inclined towards polygamy compared to men raised by single fathers or in polygamous families.

Men raised by single fathers often exhibit bravery and a willingness to take risks, though many lead conventional lives. Having often faced struggles, they may be more accustomed to challenges than those raised in more sheltered environments by single mothers or both parents. The latter may grow up seeking to replicate that comfortable and protective environment, potentially leading to a more financially secure life. While upbringing isn't the sole determinant of wealth, it can be a contributing factor.

3. Relatives' Love: Children raised by relatives also develop uniquely, and their approach to life and situations is influenced by their upbringing.

In conclusion, the different forms of parental love significantly shape a child's development and their interactions with the world.

5. Relatives’ love

Relatives also share love with children, which creates a distinct experience for them. Have you ever noticed the difference in how you feel at your parents' home compared to when you stay with relatives? For those who haven't had the chance to live with either, this might not be apparent. However, children raised primarily by relatives often develop more insecurities about expressing their personal needs, perhaps feeling like a burden or fearing being overlooked.

Interestingly, these children often mature mentally at a faster pace. Growing up with a strong sense of self-reliance and accountability pushes them to become independent early in life. They may start working or seeking employment sooner, and while some may not complete their education, they often learn to navigate challenges and hustle to make ends meet. It's not that these children are necessarily unloved or uncared for by their relatives; rather, their relatives typically have their own children whose needs naturally take precedence.

6. Spiritual love

The question of religious affiliation evokes varied responses. Some readily identify with a particular faith, while others feel no connection to organized religion, grounding their spirituality elsewhere. Both perspectives are valid.

For those who believe in a creator, the concept of divine love and provision is central. Believers often express gratitude for blessings received. But how do individuals reciprocate this love?

In 2010, professors at Makerere University conducted an experiment involving students from diverse religious backgrounds, including Christianity, Islam, and even paganism, exploring how they express love for the creator.

Each student was asked the same set of questions, yielding a range of answers reflecting their unique understandings:

* How often do you communicate with or pray to the Almighty?

* How would you describe the God you believe in?

* What steps do you take before addressing your God?

* What do you consider the proper way to obey and love the Almighty?

* What led you to your current religious affiliation?

* What motivates you to remain in your faith and not explore others?

Reflecting on these questions personally can enrich our understanding as we explore the students' responses.

The five students interviewed included Christians, Muslims, born-again Christians (who, while rooted in Christianity, hold distinct beliefs such as baptism in natural bodies of water and the idea that being born again absolves one of sin), individuals who believe in God without adhering to a specific religion, and those who follow traditional beliefs and ancestor veneration.

When asked about their practices of communicating with the Almighty, the Christian students responded, "We attend church every Sunday, pray before bed and upon waking, express love through praise and thanksgiving, and pay tithes."

The Muslim students answered similarly, stating, "We attend mosque for Juma prayers on Fridays, pray five times daily, and fast during Ramadan to maintain righteousness before Allah."

The born-again Christian student explained their faith as centered on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, following the New Testament teachings and spreading His word. Their distinct baptism practice and belief about being freed from sin after being born again are central to their identity.

Students who did not follow a specific religion but believed in God shared that they express love by loving others, respecting nature, giving to the needy as a form of giving to the Almighty, and praying to Him as the ultimate giver and taker. They emphasized that everyone belongs to God, regardless of religious labels, and likened adhering to one religion to following a political party with potentially unclear motives from its founder.

It's important to note that this research offered a snapshot of individual perspectives and not a definitive conclusion on spiritual matters.

Spiritually, the inherent spirit within us is often seen as the dwelling place of divine greatness. Finding comfort and strong self-belief can be a profound personal truth.

7. Community Love

"This sentiment is truly beautiful. Do you understand the essence of community love? Do you actively share it? Is it something you often experience? What does community love mean to you? I trust you grasp its significance.

Community love sustains human life; without it, a community cannot truly exist. The feeling of community love is profoundly comforting and enriching. Imagine the warmth of people visiting you when you are ill at home – a truly wonderful experience, wouldn't you agree? Engaging in community work cultivates a sense of purpose within that community, which feels deeply meaningful and positive, correct?

Simple acts like greeting neighbors, offering visits, and responding promptly to a neighbor's emergency or crisis foster a sense of unity and security within the community.

Love imbues the world with meaning; its absence would negate existence itself. Therefore, make sure to both give and receive love, as it is among the first experiences we have after birth and often lingers in our thoughts as we depart from this world."